

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 7, 11, 14, 15, and 31 have been amended to clarify that each of a plurality of remote nodes independently makes an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to feed traffic and an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to receive traffic. Claims 16, 20, 27, and 29 have been amended to clarify that each of a plurality of remote units independently makes an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to feed traffic and an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to receive traffic. Claims 23 and 25 have been amended to clarify that each of a plurality of network units independently makes an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to feed traffic and an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to receive traffic. Support for this amendment is provided in the specification as filed at, for example, paragraphs 022-025. Accordingly, no new matter has been entered.

As amended, claims 3, 7, 11, 14, 15, 31 and their respective dependent claims are patentable over Mitchell (U.S. 6,442,134) even in combination with Cedrone (U.S. 6,538,987) because these references do not teach or suggest a ring network wherein each of a plurality of remote nodes independently makes an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to feed traffic and an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to receive traffic.

Mitchell is addressed to ATM rings wherein the same traffic is transmitted in opposite directions on both of two counter-rotating rings and wherein each node has a direct virtual path to every other node. Col. 2, ll. 24-39. In such scheme, every node initially transmits and receives all traffic over both transmission rings. In contrast, the present invention provides that each remote node independently makes an initial selection of a single transmission ring for transmitting and an initial selection of a single transmission ring for receiving traffic.

According to Mitchell, in the event that a node detects a "fault on one of its incoming links [it] sets an indication *to the next node* on the uni-directional ring." Col. 3, ll. 47-49, emphasis added. In the present invention, when a remote node detects a facility failure on a faulty transmission ring it transmits forward alarm signals on the faulty transmission ring. This transmission of alarm signals is not "to the next node," which next node, in accordance with the present invention, is not necessarily receiving traffic from the faulty transmission.

Cedrone is cited for describing a system including a plurality of nodes interconnected by

a primary and secondary ring where each node sends Continuity OAM cells on both rings. Even if true, however, incorporating such teachings with those of Mitchell would not yield the present invention for at least the reasons discussed above. Hence, claims 3, 7, 11, 14, 15, 31 and their respective dependent claims are patentable over Mitchell even in view of Cedrone.

For the reasons given above, claims 16, 20, 27, 29 and their respective dependent claims are patentable over Mitchell (U.S. 6,442,134) even in combination with Cedrone (U.S. 6,538,987) because these references do not teach or suggest a ring network wherein each of a plurality of remote units independently makes an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to feed traffic and an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to receive traffic.

For the reasons given above, claims 23, 25 and their respective dependent claims are likewise patentable over Mitchell (U.S. 6,442,134) even in combination with Cedrone (U.S. 6,538,987) because these references do not teach or suggest a ring network wherein each of a plurality of network nodes independently makes an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to feed traffic and an initial selection of a single transmission ring on which to receive traffic.

If there are any additional fees due in connection with this communication, please charge Deposit Account No. 19-3140.

Respectfully submitted,

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